DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 321 839 PS 018 602

| | |
|---|---|
| TITLE | Washington's Can Do Kids. |
| INSTITUTION | Washington State Office of Community Development, Olympia. |
| SPONS AGENCY | Washington State Legislature, Olympia. |
| PUB DATE | 31 Jul 89 |
| NOTE | 39p. |
| PUB TYPE | Reports - Descriptive (141) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC02 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Academic Failure; *At Risk Persons; Child Health; *Disadvantaged Youth; *Early Childhood Education; Economically Disadvantaged; Intervention; Language Acquisition; Low Income Groups; Parenting Skills; Parent Participation; Prevention; Program Descriptions; *Program Development; School Readiness; *Social Services; *State Programs |
| IDENTIFIERS | Developmentally Appropriate Programs; *Washington |

ABSTRACT

Conceived as a state-supported community-sponsored program for families, strengthened by business and service organization support, and designed to work with local educational, child care, and social service agencies, Washington State's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP, pronounced e-cap) provides a "whole child" preventative intervention program to low-income 4-year-olds who, without help, are at risk of failing at school. Participating parents are visited by local social workers who direct them to resources and training. ECEAP components include: (1) developmentally appropriate cognitive and social education with an emphasis on language development and readiness for formal schooling; (2) parental involvement in the classroom and in parenting skills training; (3) a broad range of medical, dental, mental health, and nutritional services including health screenings and meal provision; and (4) social services, including parental support groups and assistance in making use of community resources. ECEAP is presented in this report in sections describing the program, providing background information, describing a wide range of accomplishments, detailing methods and means, and projecting a vision of the future. Appendices provide lists of local ECEAP contractors during 1987-1989 and ECEAP advisory committee members in 1989. (RH)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

## Washington State's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program

ED321839

# Washington's Can Do Kids

PS 018602

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Mary Frost
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**Governor Booth Gardner and the Washington State Legislature**, without whose backing the ECEAP program would not have become a reality.

**Chuck Clarke**, Director of the Department of Community Development; **Peggy Mihata**, Assistant Director, Community Assistance Division; **Mary Frost**, Children's Services Unit Manager; and the **staff of the Children's Services Unit**, for their leadership, enthusiasm and encouragement for ECEAP.

**Past and present members of the ECEAP Advisory Committee**, for their time and expertise, which continue to guide ECEAP.

**Local ECEAP Directors and their staffs**, who have nurtured the concept and implemented the service, and share the vision for children and families.

The **Washington Roundtable, Washington Association for the Education of Young Children, Early Childhood Development Association of Washington, Head Start Directors Association, and the many members of the early childhood community** for their continuing support.

STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OLYMPIA
98504-0413

BOOTH GARDNER
GOVERNOR

July 31, 1989

When the routine health screenings in Washington State's low-income preschool program diagnose one little boy's crossed eyes, we've had a start. When the program's social workers educate his parents about the problem and arrange for a local service organization to give him free glasses, we're on the right track. And when, in that same program, 32 children who wouldn't otherwise have had them receive needed glasses, another 131 are immunized, and *every* child who attends eats two hot meals every class day, we're moving in the right direction. Making it possible for today's four-year-olds to learn--by removing barriers of hunger, health problems, and parental lack of knowledge--is the essence of our Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program.

Early childhood education programs that address a child's whole environment improve school performance and reduce later social troubles. Studies have shown that a $1 investment in comprehensive preschool programs for children from low-income families pays dividends of $4.75 saved in later welfare, special education, juvenile delinquency, health care, and unemployment costs. That's high yield financial strategy. In Washington State, the $2,100-2,900 spent on each child in ECEAP constitutes an insurance policy against possible later expenses such as holding that child back a year ($2,546) or routing the child into special education classes (up to $8,828 per year). Then there are the financial costs and the largely incalculable social costs of possible crime, drug use, teen pregnancy, lost taxes, and unemployment to add in as well.

ECEAP works with families and through local communities. ECEAP was conceived as a state-supported community-sponsored program for families, strengthened by business and service organization support and designed to work with local educational, child care, and social service agencies. Parents are visited by local social workers who direct them to resources and training. Of twelve parents in one local ECEAP-sponsored group this past year, six earned their GED's and four have enrolled in a local community college.

Since its beginning three years ago, ECEAP has improved the lives of more than 5,000 Washington four-year-olds and their families. Head Start, a federally-funded preschool program, has served another 18,000. But during those same three years, roughly 61,000 *more* low-income children in our state qualified as "educationally at risk." They entered school without the advantages of a booster program. A few years from now we may be paying a big price for such neglect.

Early childhood programs like ECEAP--community-based, family-centered, and comprehensive--make sense as strategic investments in the lives of our children, and in the future of this state. Under the direction of the Department of Community Development and with the guidance of an advisory committee of early childhood experts, ECEAP coordinates with welfare reform and other programs sponsored by the Department of Social and Health Services and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. ECEAP provides a foundation which helps to place Washington State in a good position to access federal funding from such proposed programs as Smart Start and other child care and family service initiatives.

Sincerely,

Booth Gardner

Booth Gardner
Governor

Legislative Building AS-13 • Olympia, Washington 98504 • (206) 753-6780 • (Scan) 234-6780

# CONTENTS


**Executive Summary** ..... iii

**Introduction** ..... 1

**Who We Are** ..... 3
- Description ..... 3
- Philosophy ..... 3

**Why We're Here** ..... 5
- The Washington Picture, I: Children in Poverty ..... 5
- Benefits of Comprehensive Preschools ..... 5
- The Washington Picture, II: Preschool Education as Investment ..... 6

**What We've Accomplished** ..... 7
- ECEAP's Child Tracking System ..... 7
- ECEAP's Participants - A Demographic Description ..... 7
- ECEAP's "Ecological Model" ..... 9
- Education - Description and Goals ..... 9
- Education Component - Findings: Cognitive Growth .. 10
- Education Component - Findings: Social Skills and Emotional Maturity ..... 13
- Parent Involvement - Description and Goals ..... 13
- Parent Involvement Component - Findings ..... 13
- Health Services - Description and Goals ..... 15
- Health Component - Findings ..... 15
- Social Services - Description and Goals ..... 16
- Social Services Component - Findings ..... 16
- A Fifth Component: Administration ..... 17
  - Structure ..... 17
  - Administrative Efficiency ..... 17
  - Quality of Services ..... 17
  - Interagency Cooperation ..... 18
  - Community Capacity Building ..... 18
  - Private and Corporate Support ..... 18

**How We Did It** ..... 19
- Inspecting the Foundation ..... 19
- Developing the Blueprint: 1985-1986 ..... 19
- Building the Program: 1986-1987 ..... 19
- Program Enhancements: 1987-1989 ..... 20

**Where We're Going** ..... 21

**Resources** ..... 23

**Appendix A: ECEAP Contractors, 1987-1989** ..... 25

**Appendix B: ECEAP Advisory Committee Members, 1989** ..... 31

# FIGURES AND TABLES

**Figures**


Figure 1: Number of Children Served by ECEAP and Head Start in each County of the State of Washington (1988-1989) ..... 2

Figure 2: Ecological Model ..... 11


**Tables**


Table 1: Ethnicity and Primary Language of ECEAP Children (1986-1989) ..... 8

Table 2: Findings: Teacher Ratings - Social Skills and Emotional Maturity of ECEAP Children (1986-1987) ..... 13

Table 3: Number of Months in Which Mother, Father, or Other Adult took Part in ECEAP Parent Involvement Activities (1986-1987) ..... 14

Table 4: Comparative Scores of ECEAP Children on Cognitive Tests, By Parents' Degree of Participation (1986-1987) ..... 15

Table 5: Health Needs of ECEAP Children Reported by Parents Compared to Health Needs Identified Through Screenings (1986-1987) .. 16

Table 6: Number of Social Services Provided to ECEAP Families (1986-1987) ..... 17

Table 7: Types of Social Services Provided to ECEAP Families (1986-1987) ..... 17

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

One of the most telling long-term investments this state can make is an investment in its children. The number of children living in poverty is rising sharply in Washington and throughout the nation. As Governor Gardner recently testified before the U.S. Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, our country's education system strains to meet the needs of less functional families. But there is a proven partial solution: high-quality, comprehensive preschool education.

Studies comparing children from low-income families who attended comprehensive preschool programs to statistically similar children who did not, reveal that preschool experiences substantially increase the likelihood of success in later schooling through high school. Preschool "graduates" test at higher cognitive levels, are more ready academically for regular schooling, need less special education in later years, are retained less often, and have a greater high school graduation rate. By age 19, the preschool group shows reduced delinquency rates, fewer teenage pregnancies, higher employment rates, and a better college entrance percentage than low-income children who did not go to preschool.

Our state's figures bear witness to the wisdom of an early investment strategy. During the last three years, Washington's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, working through local communities, has provided more than 5,200 "educationally at risk" four-year-olds with a quality preschool experience. The cost per child averages between $2,100 and $2,900 per year, depending on local resources available. Compare this to the amount Washington taxpayers spend on every child who is retained ($2,546 per grade), requires special education (up to $8,828), or drops out of school before graduation (as much as $200,000 in lost taxes, welfare, and criminal justice expenditures).

This year, fewer than 8,000 of Washington's 28,000 educationally at risk three- and four-year-olds were served through ECEAP and Head Start (the federally-funded comprehensive preschool program). In Governor Gardner's words, "We are losing an entire generation because our investments have been too small and too sporadic." Now is the time to change our strategy and improve the quality of life in 21st century Washington State.

### Who We Are

The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program is a "whole-child" intervention program designed to help low-income four-year-old children who, without special assistance, would be at risk of failure in formal education. ECEAP operates through local organizations which contract with the state to provide high-quality, comprehensive preschool programs. The term "comprehensive" refers to ECEAP's four interactive components, each of which affects readiness for education: developmentally appropriate cognitive and social education with an emphasis on language development and readiness for formal schooling; parental involvement in the classroom and in parenting skills training; a broad range of medical, dental, mental health, and nutritional services including health screenings and meal provision; and social services including parental support groups and assistance in making use of community resources. ECEAP's emphasis is on mobilizing and building local human service capacity to strengthen families and communities, the primary influences in children's education and development.

A planning grant from the Legislature in 1985 allowed the State Department of Community Development to draw on the experience of experts in early childhood education while developing a blueprint for Washington's preschool program. The 1986 Legislature endorsed the plans with $2.97 million in operating funds for service to 1,000 children during the following program year. Twelve contracts were awarded to local school districts, local governments, nonprofit organizations, and community colleges which applied to develop and manage programs. In 1987, with strong bi-partisan support, funding was increased to $12.1 million for the biennium, and 21 contractors began serving 2,047 children and their families each year at 63 sites around the state.

### What We've Accomplished

Since 1986, 5,102 children (not including turnover) have been served by locally-based ECEAP programs. This exceeds legislative intent by 102 children. Demographic analysis reveals that in the first year of operation roughly 65 percent of the children were Caucasian and 35 percent Hispanic, Black, Asian/Pacific Islander or American Indian/Alaska Native. Enrollment has since shifted toward higher percentages of participants from minority backgrounds. By 1988-89, 28 percent of ECEAP's participants were of Hispanic heritage, 7 percent Black, 7 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 5 percent American Indian/Alaska Native, and 49 percent Caucasian. Three-fourths in 1986-1987 were from families whose income was less than 75 percent of federal poverty guidelines. More than half of ECEAP children live in a single-parent family.

## Washington's Can Do Kids

Vocabulary and academic readiness test results show that ECEAP participants make statistically significant improvements during the one-year program. Children most at risk of poor performance (by reason of statistically relevant demographic factors of mother's education level, ethnicity, family size, language spoken at home, and number of older siblings who repeated a grade in school) also show the biggest gains in cognitive preparedness for formal education. ECEAP appears to be most helping students who need the most help.

Health, parental, and family factors also affect a preschooler's ability to learn. In each of these areas, local ECEAP staff work with families to solve problems by mobilizing community resources. Each child receives a physical exam, a dental check, and a variety of screening tests within 90 days of enrollment. Parents are assisted in finding low-cost or free local medical and dental care, or, when necessary, those services are provided with ECEAP funds. Breakfast or lunch, and a snack are provided for each child as part of every classroom session. Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in the program in a number of ways, including helping in their child's classroom, attending parenting classes and support groups, and taking part in decisions about the program. Staff regularly visit parents in their homes to provide suggestions and educational materials chosen for their children. Test results show that the more times a child's parents participate in classroom activities or home visits, the higher that child's cognitive learning gain during the ECEAP year. Trained social service staff also make home visits to each ECEAP family to help parents learn to effectively solve problems.

ECEAP standards require that local programs use community resources. Local service organizations have provided ECEAP children with help ranging from donations of eyeglasses to raising money to purchase a van. Physicians and dentists give ECEAP children medical help free or at reduced cost. In one western Washington program, ECEAP parents themselves work together on food drives to help the more needy families. Such cooperation extends to other state-funded programs in local communities; of twelve parents who regularly attended one eastern Washington ECEAP support group in 1987-1988, six earned their GED's and four have enrolled in community college classes.

Resource mobilization, local community planning and investment, and interagency collaboration are also goals of the Department of Community Development staff who are ECEAP at the state level. They have worked to establish ties with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Social and Health Services, Federal Region X Head Start, and the Employment Security Department to allow maximum use of resources and the coordination of efforts. As a result, to give one example, Even Start programs administered by OSPI for adults with less than eighth grade reading and computational skills are often held in conjunction with ECEAP sessions, in effect allowing parents to go to school "with" their children.

### Where We're Going

As poverty increases among families with young children, early intervention in the form of education and opportunities for self-help will become even more vital. If we are to eliminate the negative influences of poverty and disability, we must reach more children, and we must reach them when they are young.

# INTRODUCTION

More than 259,000 children--enough to fill each seat in the Kingdome three and a half times--live in poverty. In Washington State. Today. Unless something unusual intervenes in their lives, many will grow to an adulthood shaped by chronic deprivation, a condition which corrodes human lives with the twin acids of dependency and despair.

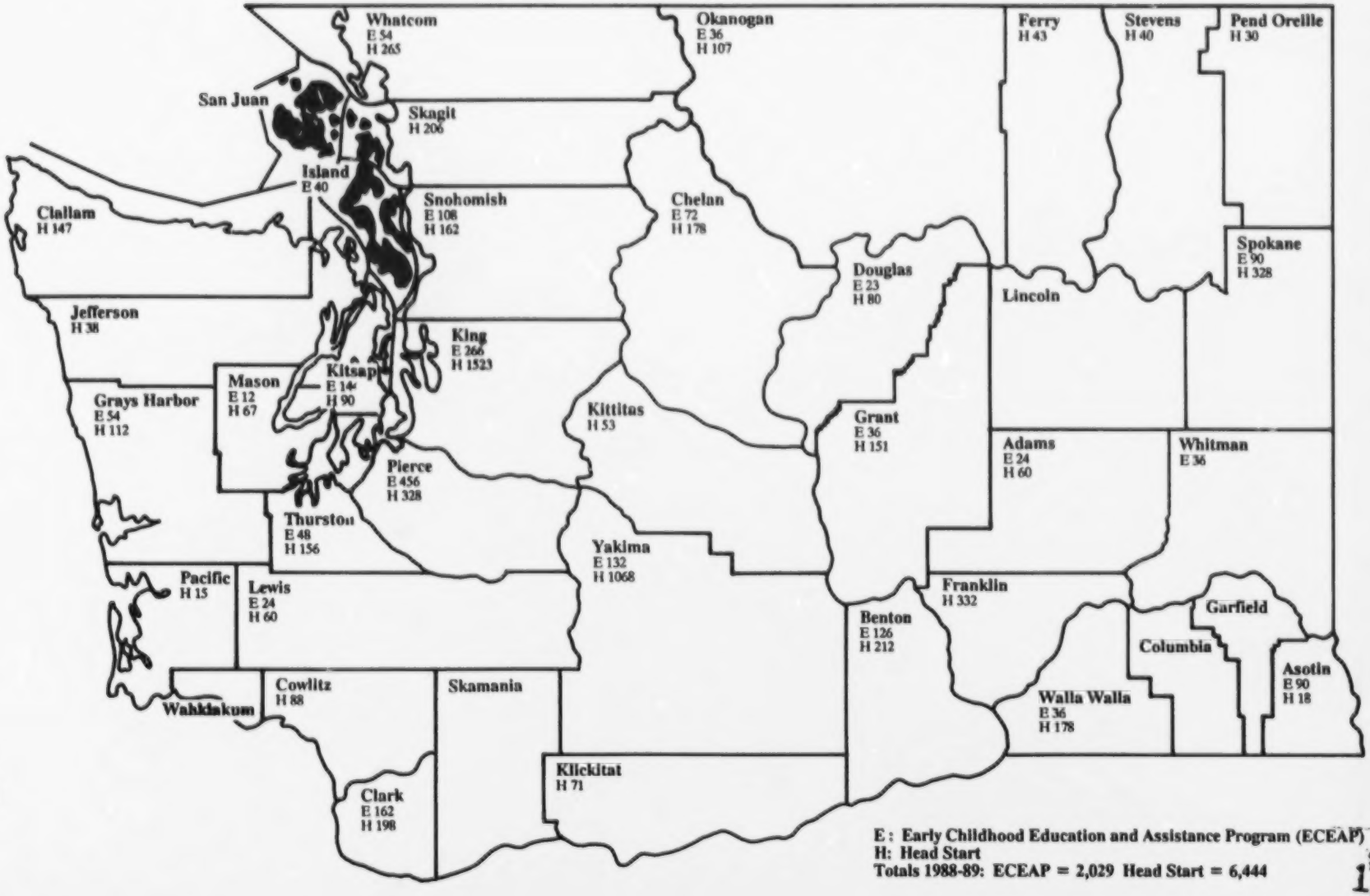
The cost of poverty is enormous, one we as a state and society can ill afford to pay. It is impossible to quantify human suffering, but we can put dollar amounts to its outward effects. For example, children from low-income families are three times more likely to drop out of school than their peers from more advantaged economic backgrounds. Each child who leaves school early will use more public resources than the high school graduate; some estimate that the cost in Washington State is as high as $200,000 in lost taxes, welfare, and criminal justice expenditures. Multiply 259,000 by a conservative 25 percent (the present drop-out rate for Washington children from *all* economic backgrounds), and the cost for low-income children who drop out of school becomes $12,950,000,000. This bill will come due to Washington taxpayers during our lifetimes.

What can we do? Conclusive national studies point to a proven way to help more low-income children stay in school, and to cut costs of juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy, lost taxes, and welfare. That way is early intervention in poverty's erosion of will and self-confidence via high-quality, comprehensive preschool programs. According to the state's Office of Financial Management, an estimated 28,444 of Washington's poverty-level children are three- and four-year-olds. Last year, federally-funded Head Start programs, and Washington's own Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, reached fewer than 8,000. (See accompanying map.)

**The child listened as we described all the things she could do in the [ECEAP] program. Then she asked if she would get to eat, too. When I told her she would get both a snack and lunch, her eyes lit up and she said, "Oh, good, we don't have enough food at home."**
**-an ECEAP teacher**

# STATE OF WASHINGTON

Children Served by ECEAP and Head Start
1988-89




E : Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)
H: Head Start
Totals 1988-89: ECEAP = 2,029 Head Start = 6,444

Washington State's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP, pronounced e-cap) provides a "whole-child" preventative intervention program to low-income four-year-olds who, without help, are at risk of failing in formal education. Because many factors affect a child's ability to learn and develop normally, ECEAP is comprised of four interactive components:

1. Developmentally appropriate cognitive and social education for at risk four-year-old children, with an emphasis on language development and readiness for formal schooling;

2. Parental involvement in the classroom, in parenting skills training and support groups, and in decision making for local programs;

3. Health services, including medical, dental, mental health and nutritional education, screenings, services, and referrals; and

4. Social services, including assessment, training, and referrals designed to help family units become more functional and self-sufficient, and to teach parents how to advocate for their children.

ECEAP children are four years of age, not yet in kindergarten, and from a family whose income during the last twelve months has been at or below federal poverty guidelines. Staff recruit and enroll eligible children regardless of race, sex, creed, color, national origin, or handicapping condition. The broad intent of ECEAP, to give children at risk of school failure enhanced learning opportunities, allows local programs to fill up to ten percent of their enrollment with children who are at risk for such reasons as neglect, abuse, or handicapping conditions, regardless of family income. In addition, one of every ten ECEAP enrollment slots statewide is targeted to Native Americans and the children of migrant and seasonal farm workers, since both populations currently have limited access to intervention and social services.

ECEAP is housed at the state level in the Department of Community Development, Community Assistance Division, and operates locally through school districts, units of local government, nonprofit organizations, child care providers, and community colleges. In 1988-89, ECEAP's third year of service, 21 contractors worked with children and their families, filling 2,047 enrollment spaces at 63 sites around the state. (Appendix A lists ECEAP's local contractors.)

**Philosophy**

ECEAP rests on the belief that education can help halt the cumulative human effects of poverty by nurturing individual and community growth built on a foundation of realized human potential. While parents are a child's first and most influential teachers, and so bear the primary responsibility for education, fewer and fewer children in Washington live in an effective family unit. Many parents simply cannot meet their children's needs. If we are to live in a healthy society--with vital schools, minimal crime and social problems, a stable work force, and self-sufficient citizens--we must provide proactive opportunities for this state's children.

Because state and local governments bear the brunt of payments for some of poverty's symptoms, such as teenage pregnancy, welfare assistance, and juvenile delinquency, they have the most to gain from investment in high quality early childhood programs which can help break the downward spiral of school failure. State government marshals resources needed for preventative intervention programs such as ECEAP. The state links among state and federal programs and local efforts, and provides coordination designed to make the most of every available resource. Because state and federal resources stretch ever thinner, however, an important part of ECEAP lies in the development of community capacity building and collaboration.

**We believe children that *can do* for themselves, *will do* for their communities when they reach adulthood. That is our vision of the future.**
**-Governor Booth Gardner**

## Washington State's ECEAP

The Department of Community Development is committed to creating service delivery systems that will better the lives of Washington's children and families and its communities and neighborhoods. The agency's role as enabler catalyzes local capacities to plan, identify problems, and create workable solutions.

**"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" never had greater application than in the case of preschool programs for the at risk child.**
**-The Washington Roundtable**

**The Washington Picture, I: Children in Poverty**

Some 1.3 million children and youth reside in Washington State, roughly one-quarter of the population. Approximately one-fifth (259,000) live in poverty. Another 388,000 will experience poverty sometime during their formative years. While any child can be at risk of school failure--and the low self-esteem, poor employment prospects, and lack of self-sufficiency which often accompany it--the Governor's Commission on Children has identified the following factors as characteristics that place preschoolers "at risk" in a broad sense: family poverty, ethnic minority, single-parent households, young/unskilled parents, lack of adequate child care, poor physical health, no permanent home, inadequate nutrition, lack of access to health services, and parents who are substance abusers. A picture of the disabling and frequently self-perpetuating cycle of poverty, of an often desperate inability to meet human need, emerges from this description.

**Benefits of Comprehensive Preschools**

In the 1960's, Americans began to realize that unless outside forces intervene, poverty often feeds on itself, resulting in yet more poverty. Instead of dealing with the results of deprivation, it might be more cost-effective--and more caring--to attempt to prevent it. The so-called "War on Poverty" programs of the Great Society era were formulated on this premise. One was Head Start, a comprehensive preschool program for low-income three- to five-year-olds aimed at helping these children catch up to their more economically advantaged peers before competing with them in school.

The concerns which created Head Start spawned several state-funded programs across the United States. There are now 20 years of studies following low-income children who took part in a variety of preschool programs through the educational system and beyond. The findings make a solid case for the effectiveness of preschool education as a successful preventative intervention strategy in the lives of low-income children and parents.

The research shows that quality comprehensive preschools--those with low student/staff ratios, which involve parents and provide health and other social services to families, and use activities appropriate for the child's current level of development -- have long-lasting benefits. In brief, quality preschool programs:

- Improve the child's cognitive skills as measured by standardized tests.
- Increase the child's readiness for formal schooling.
- Reduce the need for holding children back one or more grades.
- Reduce the need for later special education.

When compared to other low-income children who were statistically similar in every respect except attendance at a comprehensive preschool, preschool "graduates" show:

- Greater high school graduation rate.
- Better college enrollment percentage.
- Higher rate of employment at age 19.
- Fewer teen pregnancies.
- Reduced delinquency and arrest rates.
- Decreased enrollment in welfare programs at age 19.

Preliminary cost-benefit analysis from one particularly careful study, the Perry Preschool Project in Michigan, revealed that initial investment in preschool education was returned 700 percent via reduction of later

**We now know how to save about half the young people who fall prey to illiteracy, unemployment, and teenage pregnancy. Twenty years of research on preschool education has demonstrated the effectiveness of early prevention.**
**-The Committee for Economic Development**

social and educational costs and increased earnings.

Early childhood education cannot neutralize the possible results of poverty, but it does help reverse the cause and effect process. As authors of the 1981 report Early Childhood Education Study: Washington's Three- and Four-Year-Olds put it (page 47):

> The children [in the Perry Preschool Project] improved their cognitive ability through preschool, so that their initial contact with the next level of schooling was positive, and they experienced greater success in the following years. As a result, they became more committed to schooling and demonstrated higher achievement--a success-oriented role that was reinforced by teachers, parents, and peers. Being more strongly directed toward school success, they engaged in deviant behavior less frequently.

**The Washington Picture, II: Preschool Education as Investment**

Present costs of one year's enrollment in ECEAP range from $2,100 to $2,900 for each child, depending on the availability of local resources. This certain expense can be viewed as an investment in prevention of later possible costs: state figures of $2,546 per child per grade retained; up to $8,828 per child who requires special education; and estimated costs of as much as $200,000 in lost taxes and welfare and criminal justice expenditures for each youngster who drops out of formal schooling.

Benefits of proactive investment in low-income four-year-olds aren't limited to straightforward savings at the local school district. Poverty takes its revenge on individual lives through a complex, interwoven web of effects. For example, in Pierce County alone, 131 children received needed immunizations through the 1986-87 ECEAP program. Every dollar spent on early childhood vaccinations saves $10 in later health costs. Each teen pregnancy prevented in this state--and fewer teen pregnancies is a nationally documented descriptor of comprehensive preschool "graduates"--saves $2,108 for pregnancy, delivery, and hospitalization; and an additional $4,620 for public assistance per year for each mother and child who need it (1985 dollars). Teen parents are more likely to use public services such as medicaid, AFDC, food stamps, and employment programs, and for a longer period of time, than non-teen parents, and are at the highest risk for child neglect and abuse. Children born to teen parents are more likely than other children to be raised in poverty, and more likely to become teen parents themselves.

Consideration of the approaching state shortage of adequately trained workers reveals a hidden potential benefit of early investment in children. Where once willingness to work equaled employability, now problem-solving, the ability to learn, and sophisticated technical skills are requirements of increasingly complex work places attuned to the global economy. If we are to compete successfully in global markets - markets which require innovative, high quality products and fast decisions - our work force must be multi-skilled, and flexible enough to adapt to rapidly changing demands. We cannot tolerate high dropout rates and wasted human potential. The Washington State Economic Development Board recommends "expanding publicly-supported preschool programs for disadvantaged children to ensure that all students arrive at grade school similarly prepared to learn" as one aspect of its action plan to build a work force which will give our state a competitive edge in the world-wide economy. (Washington Works Worldwide, pages 45 and 47.)

**Ultimately, the [Pacific Northwest] region's productivity will depend on how well its citizenry is educated.**
**-Institute for Public Policy and Management, University of Washington**

Just how effective is ECEAP? Is Washington's investment paying off for its children, and their families, communities, and state?

Early indications from ECEAP's first three years of service show that ECEAP programs:

- reach their intended participants;
- effectively ready children for entry into formal schooling; and
- make a significant difference in the lives of low-income children and families.

**ECEAP's Child Tracking System**

The best measure of a direct service program is its effects on participants--in ECEAP's case, economically "at risk" four-year-old children and their families. The broad purpose of ECEAP's child tracking system is to evaluate ECEAP's effectiveness in preparing children for success in the common school system.

The tracking system evolved from the realization, well-supported by research, that effective intervention in a force as pervasive as poverty must involve more than skill acquisition. A little boy who cannot hear the teacher give directions cannot learn to follow them. The little girl whose parents are still youths themselves may not have the wise love and models at home which will help her learn to talk rather than hit. The ECEAP Ecological Model on page 11 depicts communities, ECEAP, families, and the children themselves interacting to determine each child's readiness as she or he enters school.

In ECEAP's first service year (1986-1987), child/family demographic and participation statistics were collected and then correlated to measures of cognitive gain and school readiness. Analysis and feedback keyed evolution to the study's present cross-sectional, longitudinal design. Beginning in 1987-1988, three yearly "waves" of children (in total, approximately 450) are being followed to the fourth grade. Each wave comprises one third of the families from one third of the ECEAP programs around the state. With the cooperation of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, as each wave enters kindergarten a comparison group of children who did not attend a comprehensive preschool--matched to ECEAP "graduates" on age, sex, demographic, and parental characteristics--will be selected, and both followed to fourth grade. Program effectiveness measures to be collected include school readiness data, grade retention, family stability factors, academic performance at fourth grade, and rates of referral for special education.

**ECEAP's Participants - A Demographic Description**

To be eligible for the ECEAP program, each child must be four or older, but not yet in kindergarten, and family income must be 100 percent or less of the federal poverty level for the twelve months preceding enrollment. Program standards based on legislation regulating ECEAP specifically state that children eligible for the program will be enrolled "regardless of race, sex, creed, color, national origin, or handicapping condition." (ECEAP program standards are available from the Department of Community Development.)

Because the broad intent of ECEAP is to give a boost to children at risk of school failure, up to ten percent of the enrollment in a local program may be made up of children whose family income exceeds the federal poverty level, but who are at risk for other reasons such as abuse, neglect, or disabling conditions. In addition, following an ECEAP Advisory Council recommendation, since 1987 ten percent of the enrollment slots available statewide are targeted for

**I am very grateful for everything that you have done for my son . . . I have seen him learn and grow each day both in an academic and in a personal-social way and I have always felt your professional concern and commitment.**
**-an ECEAP parent**

migrant and seasonal farm worker and Native American (on or off reservations) children, since both populations currently have limited access to intervention and social services.

ECEAP children reflect the broad cultural diversity of Washington State's population. Poverty is not the sole province of any one ethnic group; although the proportion of persons in poverty is higher among minority groups, the most recent federal census revealed that in terms of actual numbers, more Caucasians than people of the state's other ethnic groups are poor simply because of the actual relative sizes of the population groups. Such simplistic analysis ignores, of course, individual experiences and the complex differences of quality of life based on ethnic and cultural backgrounds. In 1980, the proportions of all persons in the Washington State poverty population were as follows: 4% Asian, 5% Black, 80% Caucasian, 3.8% Native American, 6.4% Spanish origin. (Specific information was not available for children.)

Since inception in 1986, ECEAP has filled 5,102 enrollment spaces. (The actual number of ECEAP children is somewhat higher, due to turnover. Every local ECEAP program has a waiting list.) Information in the following table shows a shift in demographic make-up of ECEAP children, reflecting the statewide MSFW/Native American enrollment set-aside instituted in 1987. With the change in ethnic make-up, there was a corresponding shift in language spoken at home.

Other demographic variables also modulated. In 1988-89, more ECEAP children lived with both parents (41 percent in 1988, as compared to 36.7 percent in 1986) and more ECEAP families list "wages" as their major source of income (26.7 percent in 1986, up to 42 percent in 1988), indicating that ECEAP may be reaching more "working poor" families. This is supported by the fact that while in 1986 20.2 percent of ECEAP mothers worked outside their homes, by 1988 the percentage had risen to 28 percent.

**"Poverty" . . . includes both the poor and working poor population of Washington State. Lack of adequate family income is a restraining factor which reduces what can be done or attained.**
**-Governor's Commission on Children**

**TABLE 1**

**ETHNICITY AND PRIMARY LANGUAGE OF ECEAP CHILDREN (1986-1989)**

| | 1986-7 | 1987-8 | 1988-9 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Language** | | | |
| Asian | 8.1% | 4.0% | 4.0% |
| English | 82.5% | 81.0% | 73.0% |
| Spanish | 8.8% | 10.0% | 17.0% |
| Other | 0.6% | 1.0% | 1.0% |
| **Ethnicity** | | | |
| American Indian/ Alaska Native | 3.2% | 6.0% | 5.0% |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 7.4% | 6.0% | 7.0% |
| Black | 12.5% | 10.0% | 7.0% |
| Caucasian | 65.5% | 58.0% | 49.0% |
| Hispanic | 11.5% | 17.0% | 28.0% |
| Other | | 1.0% | 2.0% |

**ECEAP's "Ecological Model"**

Ecology: the web of relations between an organism and its environment.

Though we often think of ecology as having to do with trees and streams, children, too, are a natural resource--a resource likewise affected by all around them. Trees and streams do not operate naturally when choked by garbage or pollution, or when the soil lacks essential nutrients; children cannot develop normally when ill or hungry, and when they do not receive appropriate nurturance. ECEAP's "ecological" intervention model rests on the assumption that everything in a child's environment affects his or her ability to learn. Four major, interrelated components of development are directly addressed through the program: education, parental involvement, health services, and social services.

**Education Through ECEAP - Description and Goals**

Education for preschoolers is largely a matter of readiness for formal schooling. Instead of the "three R's" traditionally associated with "education," ECEAP students learn preacademic skills such as associative vocabulary, recognizing colors and body parts, and following directions. Social development and emotional maturity also directly affect learning and are part of the education staff's concerns.

The goal of ECEAP's education component is to provide a developmentally appropriate learning environment for children. The environment will foster intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth; provide for prevention or early identification and intervention with problems interfering with learning; and help children transition effectively from preschool into the public school system.

Rather than prescribe a core curriculum for every program, to be administered regardless of participants' differences, ECEAP allows local contractors to develop and select local curriculum. Program-wide expectations mandate a developmentally based curriculum; appropriate behavioral standards; readiness skills (such as recognition of numbers and shapes); age-appropriate personal safety, health and nutrition education; language development as a major focus; and attention to gross and fine motor skill development.

ECEAP's program standards acknowledge the diversity of its population by requiring that the program "promote cultural awareness and ethnic pride." When the majority of children speak a common language other than English, as is the case in several programs, at least one teacher or aide who speaks that language actively participates in group experiences. In cases where a few or one child speaks a different language, then one adult, perhaps a community resource person or volunteer, is available. In general, ECEAP education staff strive to provide exposure to new ideas, concepts, and experiences and to create an excitement for discovery and learning for *all* children.

Local flexibility in program design is also encouraged after certain baseline requirements, such as a 32 week program year, are met. Two program organizational structures, designated as "center-base" and "home-base," describe most current local ECEAP delivery models. Program standards for the center-base option require that children be provided with a minimum of ten hours per week of group programming spread over three or more days; that there be a minimum of one and one-half hours of staff and parent contact time per month; and that ECEAP staff visit the child's family at least twice a year to facilitate education. Lead classroom teachers must have a baccalaureate degree in early childhood education and a minimum of one year of experience, or an associate of arts degree and two years of experience; class sizes do not exceed 18 children per lead teacher. A ratio of one adult for every six children is maintained during group participation.

The emphasis of the home-base option is on training parents to be effective educators. ECEAP families receive weekly 90-minute visits during which staff members train, role model, and encourage parents to teach their children. The children themselves participate in a weekly peer group experience. Home-base educators must have a Bachelor of Arts Degree in adult education or development, social work, or psychology, and one year of experience with low-income families; or an Associate of Arts Degree in human services and two years of similar experience. Maximum caseload size is twelve children per home-base educator. The 1:6 adult:child ratio requirement must be met during peer group experience time.

A "locally-designed" option is also available with DCD approval and is encouraged for any community which feels its unique needs are better served by creative program designs.

**[ECEAP staff] care and if you need help they help. They take time for you and they pay attention to the children.**
**-an ECEAP parent**

**Education Component - Preliminary Findings: Cognitive Growth**

Preliminary available data concerning the effectiveness of ECEAP's education component was gathered in 1986-87 from a statistically valid sample of 177 ECEAP children (15 percent of the total ECEAP population). The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (vocabulary) and the Cooperative Preschool Inventory (readiness) were administered in pre- and post-tests by independent testers. Teachers rated children's social development and emotional maturity.

Vocabulary and readiness test results showed that ECEAP participants made significant cognitive learning gains during their year in the program. Scores jumped 10.5 standardized points between administrations of the readiness test. Gains on the vocabulary test were not as striking, but at 4.1 standardized points, still statistically significant. In both areas, gains during the ECEAP year were significantly above what would be expected through normal maturation. (Statistically "standardized" scores allow comparison of scores obtained from a single program, such as ECEAP, to national norms. A value of "0" indicates normal or expected gain. Standardized scores which show an increase of 10.5, as did the ECEAP students' readiness scores, are considered by the U.S. Office of Education to indicate a successful educational program in which children are learning at roughly twice the rate of gain established by national norm groups. In this case, the national scores compared to ECEAP's marks were posted by children from families whose income was at or below federal poverty guidelines.)

Because so many factors affect children's degree of risk for school failure, pretest scores on the vocabulary and readiness tests were compared to demographic statistics. Cognitive readiness for school was found to be significantly related to these descriptors:

- Mother's education level
- Family size
- Language spoken at home
- Ethnicity
- Whether or not a sister or brother repeated a grade in school

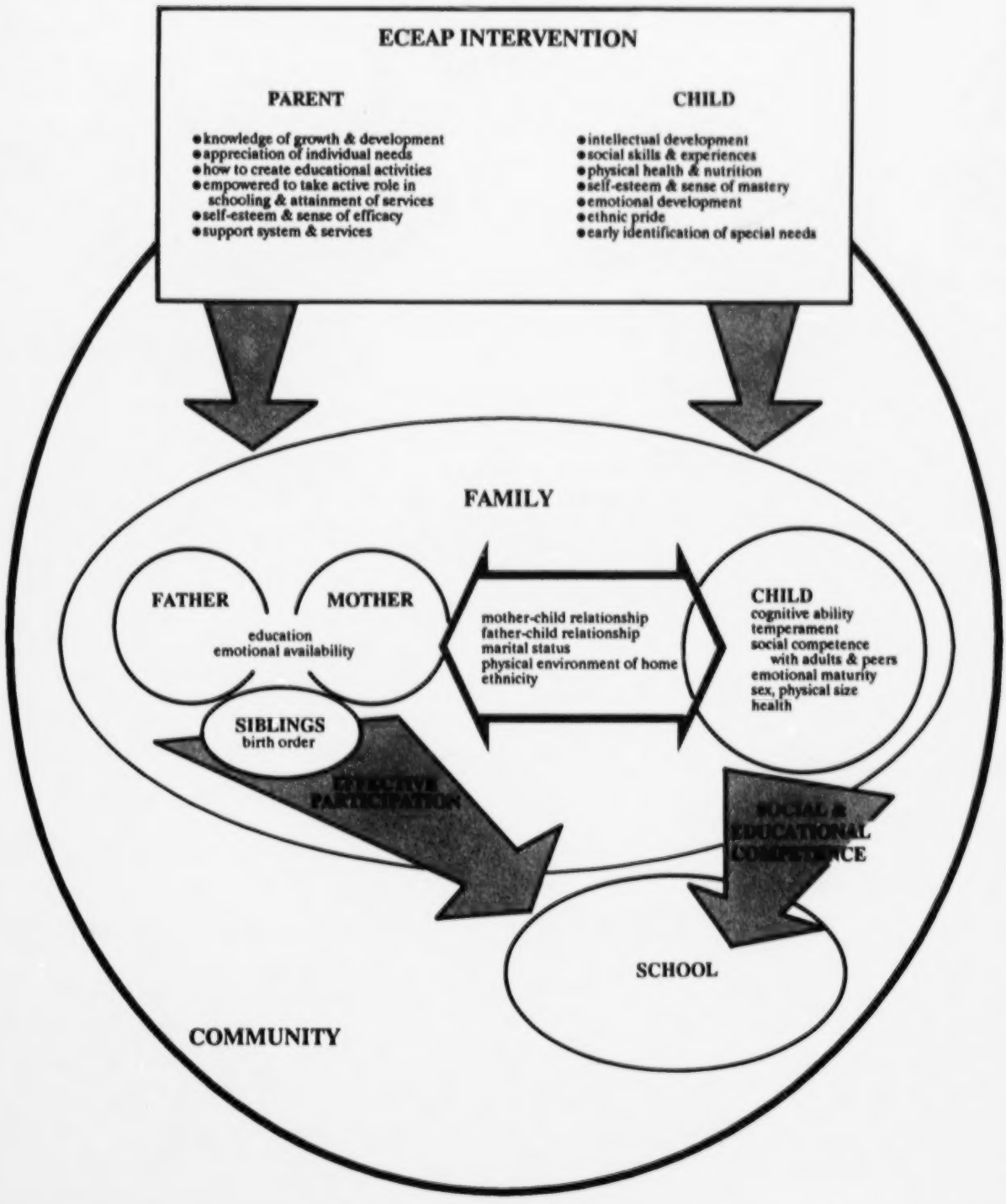
Preliminary statistical analysis showed that the "typical" most at risk ECEAP participant might be an Asian or Hispanic child who speaks a language other than English at home, whose mother has zero to eight years of education, with one or more siblings who repeated a grade at school, and five or more people in the family. The theoretical picture of a "typical" least at risk ECEAP child would be a white, English-speaking girl or boy whose mother completed high school, whose siblings have not repeated grades in school, and who lives in a family of three or smaller. In fact, any child from any family or background can be educationally at risk. But theoretical identification of children as "more" or "less" in danger of school failure provided a way for researchers to tell which low-income children needed the most help, and to find out if they were getting it.

ECEAP cognitive post-tests revealed that the largest gains in cognitive skills were made by children whom the pre-tests identified as most educationally at risk (i.e., least prepared for school). In other words, ECEAP appears to be most helping precisely those children who most need help.

Program variables also affected ECEAP children's cognitive gains as measured by the readiness and vocabulary tests. Gains in test scores were not significantly related to the number of hours either home-based or center-based program participants spent at peer group activities (i.e., attendance at centers) or in the number of hours ECEAP education staff spent visiting a child's home, with one exception: the more home visits the parents of a child who attended a center-based program received, the higher the child's improvement in terms of both school readiness and vocabulary. Both models were quite effective in helping children to acquire readiness skills. Working through the parents as teachers (home-based programs) was not as successful in increasing children's vocabulary as the center-based program.

**My son is learning how to follow directions and listen more closely. . . a chance to learn and play with other kids his age and also the importance of sharing and taking turns. He is developing the patience. . . and the skills of doing something on his own. . .**
**-an ECEAP parent**

## Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program
## Ecological Model



**Education Component - Preliminary Findings: Social Skills and Emotional Maturity**

Teacher ratings of ECEAP children's social skills and emotional maturity, completed near the beginning and at the end of the 1986-87 ECEAP year, showed that participants made significant gains in both areas. While any rating scale is necessarily "soft" data, an increasing body of research attributes validity to teacher ratings as very good predictors of child performance, and in the ECEAP program there was a very strong correlation between the emotional and social ratings at the beginning of ECEAP and the early scores on the vocabulary and readiness tests. More than one third of ECEAP children moved during the year from the "low" category on social skills to an "average to high" rating; 29 percent showed similar growth in terms of emotional maturity.

**Parent Involvement Through ECEAP - Description and Goals**

Parents are a child's first and most influential teachers. ECEAP's ecological, or comprehensive, approach includes parental involvement in all aspects of the program. Successful intervention in the poverty environment requires that parents must also learn. And learn not just skills, but the self-confidence and motivation to teach their children.

ECEAP staff actively encourage parents to take part in ECEAP in three ways. The first, "child-focused," involves parents volunteering in the classroom and working with their own children at home. While such participation is not required, it is strongly encouraged and in fact makes up an extensive part of many local programs. ECEAP education staff visit every child's home to provide parents with suggestions, materials, and encouragement as they learn to become effective teachers for their children.

ECEAP parents are eligible to attend English as a Second Language and literacy training, support groups, and classes on parenting and job skills. Local ECEAP contractors provide a number of such "adult-focused" opportunities, and coordinate with other statewide programs such as Even Start, a literacy training program for ECEAP parents (among others) whose communication and computative skills are below eighth grade level. Adult-focused involvement helps parents learn to participate positively in their child's development and to make decisions which will foster effective family functioning.

Parents may also choose to take part in the decision making structure of local ECEAP programs through membership on policy councils, advisory groups which help direct and focus local ECEAP activities.

**Parent Involvement Component - Preliminary Findings**

Growth takes time. It is too early to quantify the lasting changes a parent's earning a GED or beginning to read to a child will make in the lives of both. Anecdotal evidence from ECEAP staff and parents themselves say that this aspect of the program does make a difference, though. The following quotes describe ECEAP parental involvement at its best.

**TABLE 2**

**FINDINGS: TEACHER RATINGS - SOCIAL SKILLS AND EMOTIONAL MATURITY OF ECEAP CHILDREN (1986-1987)**

| | Before ECEAP | | After ECEAP | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | LOW | AVG. TO HIGH | LOW | AVG. TO HIGH |
| Social Skills | 81 (51%) | 77 (49%) | 21 (13%) | 137 (87%) |
| Emotional Maturity | 70 (44%) | 88 (56%) | 24 (15%) | 132 (85%) |

**Home visits [are what I liked best about ECEAP] because it not only gives the children a special feeling that someone is coming to see them, but it gives us parents something to look forward to also.**
**-an ECEAP parent**

"This year twelve young parents completed our Young Parents' Support group. Six gained GED's and two of the six enrolled in the nursing program at Walla Walla Community College. Two others enrolled in the office machines class at the same college."

Frances Mathison, Director
Lewis-Clark Early Childhood
Development Program

"When I was a child I was abused physically and mentally so that when I became a parent, I discovered I had nothing to draw from when it came to being a good parent. I found it was easy to be critical, short-tempered and exacting. I didn't know how to talk to my kids. I had no patience.

"Being at ECEAP, I see the people who work here be firm but kind, listen and laugh. And most important, they teach the kids how to talk to each other when they disagree or have a need that isn't met."

an ECEAP parent and
classroom volunteer

". . .I am a first time mother and I needed the help."

-an ECEAP parent referring to
ECEAP's parent skills training

Not all parents of ECEAP children are able to be as involved as these parents were, and in fact in terms of sustained participation "parent" usually means "mother." As the table below shows, the 59 percent of the 1986-1987 fathers who did not participate in ECEAP activities at all or did so for only one year are balanced by 62 percent of the mothers, who took part during seven or more months.

When parents were directly involved in ECEAP, their children's learning gains were apparently most closely tied to child-focused involvement. In general, the more of this type of participation the parent did, the higher ECEAP children's scores were on cognitive post-tests at the end of the year. See Table 4 on next page.

**TABLE 3**

**NUMBER OF MONTHS IN WHICH MOTHER, FATHER, OR OTHER ADULT TOOK PART IN ECEAP PARENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES (1986-1987)**

| Number of Months | Mothers | | Fathers | | Other Adult | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 1 | (0.6%) | 105 | (59.3%) | 161 | (91.0%) |
| 1 - 3 | 16 | (9.0%) | 36 | (20.5%) | 11 | (6.2%) |
| 4 - 6 | 51 | (28.8%) | 28 | (15.8%) | 3 | (1.7%) |
| 7 - 9 | 109 | (61.6%) | 8 | (4.5%) | 2 | (1.1%) |
| | 177 | | 177 | | 177 | |

**. . .one thing that I really like about volunteering my time at ECEAP . . . seeing people use positive ways to interact with kids helps me learn new ways to cope with my children.**
**-an ECEAP parent**

**TABLE 4**

**COMPARATIVE SCORES OF ECEAP CHILDREN ON COGNITIVE TESTS, BY PARENTS' AMOUNT OF PARTICIPATION (1986-1987)**

| Hours of Parent Involvement During Program Year | Readiness Test N | Readiness Test Mean Standard Score | Readiness Test Standard Deviation | Vocabulary Test N | Vocabulary Test Mean Standard Score | Vocabulary Test Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 - 18.5 | 57 | 63.4 | 18.9 | 49 | 79.5 | 18.8 |
| 19 - 37 | 58 | 64.9 | 25.5 | 50 | 91.6 | 11.5 |
| 37.5 - 412 | 60 | 72.1 | 18.6 | 60 | 89.4 | 15.1 |

N = Sample Size

**Health Services Through ECEAP - Description and Goals**

ECEAP children receive vision and hearing screenings and physical and dental examinations within 90 days of enrollment. ECEAP staff also pay specific attention to children with suspected speech and/or language problems, and to identifying special needs of children with handicaps. Appropriate follow-up services are arranged or provided for each child who needs them. Working on the principle that state ECEAP funds are "dollars of last resort" in this case, local staff try to obtain free or reduced cost care from local providers.

A Health Services Committee composed of local medical, dental, and nutrition providers, parents of enrolled children, and ECEAP staff advises each local program. Program standards also require that each ECEAP contractor give organized health education to ECEAP children, parents, and staff, with the goals of early identification and intervention for problems that may interfere with a child's development, and helping families to acquire the skills to obtain ongoing comprehensive health care as needed.

ECEAP programs provide meal services appropriate to the number of hours children attend daily center activities. Every child in a morning program who has not received breakfast before coming to the center is given a meal. Snacks are also part of the nutrition focus. Staff eat with children in a family-style environment in order to stimulate social behavior and language development.

**Health Component - Preliminary Findings**

As part of the intake process, parents are asked to list health needs of their ECEAP children. As the following table shows, the preliminary data indicates that screenings provided by the ECEAP program in 1986-1987 uncovered a number of problems of which parents were unaware, and hence were unable to address. Many of these problems, if left unchecked, eventually would have affected learning. Approximately 97 percent of the children enrolled in ECEAP for three months or longer in 1986-1987 received the health screens and a physical exam. The preliminary findings indicate that dental needs and immunizations, neither of which pose immediately life-threatening conditions, were comparatively more likely to be neglected by families than more urgent medical needs. More than one third of enrolled children needed dental care; nearly one third hadn't had recommended immunizations.

**At enrollment, one family service worker noticed that a little boy's eyes were crossed . . . The boy was referred to the doctor immediately, and currently wears corrective glasses, paid for by the local Lion's Club upon a request by ECEAP.**
**-Wendy Roedell, Director, ECEAP, ESD 121**

**TABLE 5**

**HEALTH NEEDS OF ECEAP CHILDREN REPORTED BY PARENTS COMPARED TO HEALTH NEEDS IDENTIFIED THROUGH HEALTH SCREENINGS (1986-1987)**

| Type of Problem | Number of Health Needs Reported by Parents | Number of Health Needs Not Reported by Parents And Identified Via ECEAP Screenings | Percent of Health Needs Found by ECEAP |
|---|---|---|---|
| Medical | 30 | 101 | 77.1% |
| Vision | 4 | 117 | 96.7% |
| Hearing | 2 | 144 | 98.6% |
| Speech | 4 | 98 | 96.1% |
| Dental | 35 | 268 | 83.8% |

ECEAP standards require local contractors to arrange for follow-up services as needed while the children are enrolled. In 1986-87, ECEAP programs successfully mobilized community resources to provide free or reduced cost follow-up health care for about 11.2 percent of the total number of follow-up visits. Medical coupons supplied by public assistance covered 51.8 percent of services received, 10.2 percent were paid in full from ECEAP funding, and other methods, including parent payment, took care of 28 percent. Since a fairly high proportion of ECEAP families (69.8 percent) had public assistance as their major source of income, ECEAP personnel frequently acted as intermediaries to assist parents in locating appropriate health care providers.

**Social Services Through ECEAP - Description and Goals**

The ECEAP year is a time of special support for both children and their families. But a few months may not be long enough to overcome the effects of a lifetime of poverty. Accordingly, ECEAP social services staff work to assess needs, to make parents aware of available community services, and to facilitate use. An important goal is assisting parents in their own efforts to improve the condition and quality of family life, so that they are able to continue to do so after ECEAP.

Every ECEAP family is visited by social services staff, usually a trained paraprofessional. Early visits are for the purpose of assessing all family needs, not just those directly related to ECEAP children. A mother who needs a serious operation may not have the energy to teach her child vocabulary words; the father who cannot find work to clothe his children may be too despairing to spend quality time with them. Local ECEAP programs mobilize community resources to help families find solutions to their problems.

**Social Services Component - Preliminary Findings**

The distribution of ECEAP social services staff efforts in 1986-1987 are summarized in the following tables, which detail the number of contacts and referrals made per family, and the type of social service. Nearly one half of the families did not need help beyond the staff contacts, but one third required three or more referrals for various kinds of assistance.

**. . . the program was the best thing us single parents had have.**
**-an ECEAP parent**

**TABLE 6**

**NUMBER OF SOCIAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO ECEAP FAMILIES (1986-1987)**

| Contacts Per Family By ECEAP Social Services Staff | | Referrals Made Per Family | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| 0 to 3 | 31.5% | None | 46.1% |
| 3 to 6 | 34.0% | One | 20.8% |
| 7 to 60 | 34.6% | 3 to 6 | 27.8% |
| | | 7 to 20 | 5.3% |

**TABLE 7**

**TYPES OF SOCIAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO ECEAP FAMILIES (1986-1987)**

| Types of Social Services Given | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Employment/Education | 218 | 21.1% |
| Basic Needs (Food, Shelter, Clothing) | 341 | 33.0% |
| Referral to Social Agencies | 396 | 39.4% |
| Health Needs | 384 | 37.1% |
| Other | 393 | 38.0% |

In 1986-1987, ECEAP staff used a "family independence" rating scale to describe each family's relative ability to access community resources to solve problems. This was not an assessment of need, which was also completed, but of parental knowledge and competency in overcoming barriers of poverty, cultural and language differences, and so on to obtain what members of their family needed. Ratings were completed twice, in December and June. These ratings show a general upward trend during the six months, indicating the effectiveness of ECEAP's social services component in helping parents learn self-sufficiency as they solved family problems.

**A Fifth Component: Administration**

Structure. Washington State's Department of Community Development, Community Assistance Division, holds responsibility for award and oversight of funds allocated to ECEAP by the State Legislature. DCD administers a wide array of programs targeted to economic development and local community collaboration. Five program managers, two support staff, and a unit manager presently work with ECEAP's 21 local contractors. Their duties include responsibilities such as monitoring; problem solving; providing leadership and technical assistance; facilitating systems integration and coordination; collaboration with other state and federal human service and education agencies; staffing a 30 member Advisory Committee; and cooperation with national, state, and local organizations focused on early childhood education and family services.

Administrative Efficiency. Since ECEAP's inception, DCD has stretched funds to enable allocation of more program slots than the Legislature intended, allowing 102 "extra" children and families to receive ECEAP services. Current funding of $12.1 million for the 1987-1989 Biennium was expected to serve 2,000 children a year; 2,047 enrollment spaces were actually awarded to local contractors. Less than five percent of the Legislature's appropriation is used for DCD administration of ECEAP.

Quality of Services. DCD staff use both desk-top and on-site monitoring tools designed to evaluate fiscal, management, and program information. Because many ECEAP contractors also receive Head Start funding, the programs share their monitoring findings and monitor programs

**Good policies and adequate funding alone do not make successful programs. Sound management practices are essential.**
**-Governor's Commission on Children**

jointly where feasible. The longitudinal child tracking system is another evaluative mechanism designed to indicate, over time, whether ECEAP is achieving its intent. National research on comprehensive preschool programs marks the importance of well-trained and motivated early childhood teachers. DCD currently sets aside funding for local staff training and development.

Interagency Cooperation. DCD recognizes the importance of collaboration among agencies as Washington moves toward an efficient continuum of integrated services for young children and families. DCD has an information-sharing interagency agreement with Region X Head Start and works with the federal government on major federal initiatives such as Smart Start, a proposed program which would provide funding to locate adult education, children's services, and related family support programs in community family support centers. An interagency agreement also links DCD to the state's Department of Social and Health Services, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Employment Security Department. Current partnerships include a task force working to provide ECEAP children with a smooth transition to kindergarten (ECEAP and OSPI); child abuse and neglect prevention training for children, parents, and professionals (ECEAP, DSHS, OSPI); and linkages to child care providers (ECEAP and DSHS). The inclusion of ECEAP parents in OSPI's Project Even Start, which provides literacy training, is one example of the value of agencies working together. Coordination of services allows ECEAP parents to go to school "with" their children making it easy for parents to upgrade their skills, and so become both more employable and better teachers for their own children.

Community Capacity Building. As state and federal dollars stretch ever more thinly to serve a growing population, communities must rally to find solutions to their problems. DCD works to mobilize community resources to support locally-based programs. At the local level, ECEAP money is viewed as "dollars of last resort," to be used only when needed services are otherwise unattainable. Statistics compiled during 1986-1987, for example, show that local staff obtained free or reduced rate medical and dental care for ECEAP children from local providers more often than they had to use ECEAP funds to pay the bills in full. Examples of important services community partners have donated to ECEAP children and families include:

- In Pullman, currently 37th among Washington's 39 counties in per capita income, a regional foundation, service clubs, and local fraternities have helped the ECEAP contractor, Community Child Care Center, to have use of a van and to obtain adequate equipment for food preparation.
- In another program, funds from a local service organization purchased a used school bus to transport ECEAP children.
- One local organization helped put ECEAP parents in touch with needed resources by paying to publish a community resource guide.
- In an eastern Washington town, K-Mart sponsors a Christmas party for ECEAP children.
- The ECEAP/Head Start program which serves Clark County's rapidly expanding low-income population leases a house with locally provided funds, providing parents with a place to meet, receive training, and take advantage of a clothing exchange, among other opportunities. The house is staffed and maintained by volunteer parents.

It is this local support, building capacity and fostering local investment where families live and work, that will in time reshape the service infrastructure in Washington communities.

Private and Corporate Support. The Washington Roundtable (Chief Executive Officers of major Washington businesses) commissioned a study of education in this state in 1984-85. Listed as top priority in the resultant report was the establishment of a state-funded program for at risk preschoolers. In Seattle, KIRO Broadcasting Inc. committed $250,000 of air time in 1988-1989 to support early childhood education and ECEAP, and, with the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, donated funds for the printing of an informational brochure about the program, now distributed statewide.

**. . . early childhood education is a state responsibility, is a federal concern, and is a local function.**
**-Governor Booth Gardner**

**Inspecting the Foundation**

Depression-era Emergency Nursery Schools were the first fruit of government involvement in early childhood education. In 1942, the Lanham Act provided federal money for comprehensive day programs operated in many of Washington's public schools. After the war ended, however, and on through the 1950's, state agencies emphasized other aspects of child welfare. It wasn't until the mid-1960's that changing federal priorities began to result in a corresponding expansion of state expenditures for child care and preschool education. The 1970's saw the establishment of campus child care centers at public colleges and universities around the state.

By the early years of this decade, there was widespread state interest in early childhood education. The Perry Preschool Project, a longitudinal study of a comprehensive preschool program in Ypsilanti, Michigan, published a report containing favorable cost-benefit information. An influential coalition of this state's business executives, the Washington Roundtable, commissioned a major study of education. Establishment of a state-funded program for at risk preschoolers was the group's top priority recommendation.

Governor Booth Gardner, elected in 1984 on a platform of educational reform, agreed with the importance of early intervention and prevention programs as a sound investment in Washington's future. Active child advocacy groups and state and federal agencies began to work together to place issues relating to children on legislative agendas. In 1985, Governor Gardner put state-funded preschools at the top of his legislative priority list, and on April 23, House Bill 1078, The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Act, passed with strong bi-partisan support.

**Developing the Blueprint: 1985-1986**

The state's Department of Community Development, an agency with a "can do" reputation which already administered a number of programs targeted to low-income people, was chosen to oversee ECEAP. The Legislature's first appropriation, $38,000, financed establishment of an Advisory Committee of Head Start parents and directors, school district personnel, representatives from OSPI and DSHS, early childhood experts, representatives of minority groups, and members of the Washington Roundtable and the Washington Association for the Education of Young Children, who worked with DCD to research and develop a program prototype to fit Washington's needs.

After reviewing a variety of approaches to early childhood education and researching practices of exemplary programs for four-year-old children, this early task force chose to build on the successes of Head Start to develop comprehensive, flexible local programs which were developmentally appropriate and prepared children for a successful school career. Standards were developed and a program director hired.

**Building the Program: 1986-1987**

The advisory committee's plan received endorsement from the Legislature in the form of a $2.97 million grant to fund development of the program and service to 1,000 children for one year. DCD staff, with committee support, chose a competitive Request for Proposal system for awarding funds to local contractors. In recognition of the fact that services to low-income families were spread unevenly across the state, up to 60 percent of the available funds were targeted for counties then serving less than 20 percent of the eligible population of children aged four or older, but not eligible for kindergarten, and whose families' incomes were at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty standards.

In three months, DCD staff developed program procedures and guidelines, wrote a

**The Washington State Legislature has taken a bold leadership step in establishing the ECEAP program . . . ECEAP is one of the most cost-effective investments in children that can be made.**
**-County Human Services Department Administrator**

contract format, and selected the first 12 program contractors from 36 proposals. ECEAP was underway, with 1,008 enrollment spaces at 35 sites around the state.

Administrative energies in this first service year centered on staff development and providing in-service training and technical assistance to new contractors. The first child tracking system was put in place, and connections were made with Region X Head Start, DSHS, and early welfare reform efforts.

**Program Enhancements: 1987-1989**

The 1987 Legislature considered expansion of ECEAP. Governor Gardner's continued support, widespread publicity of the program's success, and statewide interest in children's issues as a way to affect Washington's future resulted in a biennial appropriation of $12.1 million, enough money to serve 2,000 low-income children each year.

Continued funding allowed DCD staff to establish a longitudinal child tracking system, cement partnerships with other government agencies and early childhood organizations, and make some key adjustments in quality of service. As part of the application process, potential contractors were now required to:

- Make a local needs assessment, to help proposal evaluators define the most needy communities.
- Demonstrate a strong base of community support and access to community resources.
- Outline proposed work plans for each of ECEAP's four components and for administration.
- Provide a comprehensive plan for coordination of services with local school districts, which included an interagency agreement between the district and the potential ECEAP contractor.
- Include a sign-off sheet from the regional Head Start office, so that duplication of efforts could be avoided.
- Demonstrate a history of administrative capacity, fiscal responsibility, and experience or interest in child/family programs.

Fifteen new potential contractors requested ECEAP funding in 1987, and eight existing programs asked for enhancement money. Nine new programs were funded, and seven existing programs were expanded. ECEAP had grown from 12 to 21 contractors and would continue through the biennium operating 63 program sites. The 2,047 yearly enrollment spaces exceeded legislative intent (2,000) by 2.5 percent.

During the 1987-1989 Biennium, DCD staff refined the child tracking system, conducted on-site visits and program compliance monitoring with all 21 contractors; developed partnerships with Region X Head Start, OSPI, and DSHS; and worked to obtain private corporate support and to mobilize local communities through a variety of presentations and media interviews. ECEAP staff were featured presenters at two national conferences and through the National Conference of State Legislators provided testimony to the New York and Iowa Legislatures.

The Washington State ECEAP program model has been instrumental in shaping the comprehensive preschool initiatives in New Jersey, Oregon, New York, Iowa, and Alaska.

**Education is the key to both quality of life for individuals, and economic development for our state and nation.**
**-Governor Booth Gardner**

**The Challenge**

We in Washington can directly affect the quality of our lives here, and those of residents who will celebrate our state's bicentennial. Quality comprehensive preschools for children from low-income families impact all of us:

- **culturally**, as we invest in a creative, stable, and humanly productive society;
- **socially**, as we choose the quality of our interactions with each other, both now and in the future; and
- **economically**, as we prevent foreseeable remedial expenses, and prepare a work force ready to place and keep us at the growing edge of global markets.

**The Vision**

It is the year 2000, threshold of a new century. In Bay City, Washington, neighbors are gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony opening a brand new building on Bay City School District property, right next to the elementary school. According to the newspaper article clipped to an easel next to the punch bowl, the new structure we're standing in houses a preschool program, funded by state and federal government, and by local organizations and businesses and private individuals. (The reporter points out that the combination will allow for the integration of children from all income levels in the same high-quality programs.) We're a little surprised to read that the organizers of the center applied for all state support with a single application. We put down our cups, and walk through the halls. Signs indicate parent literacy and skills training rooms; preschool classrooms; a preschool disabled program; and a full complement of support services including health and social services, which, a smiling volunteer tells us, will be provided by school and public health nurses, and social and family service workers. At the end of one hall is a series of interconnected rooms. Everything is half-sized, and we realize we must be in the child care center, which will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., and which, we can see, is already providing care not only for preschoolers, but for students from the elementary school next door. A couple of six-year-olds zoom by behind us, making engine noises, and we turn to see a Washington State license, accrediting the entire building as an early childhood development center, hanging high on the blue, yellow, and green wall. Beside it a plaque commemorates the efforts of the community committee who imagined all this, integrated all this, "sold" all this to their neighbors, and made it happen.

**Can We Do It?**

Do we have a long way to go to make this vision of a continuum of integrated services for children and young families a reality in Washington? Yes . . . and no. Only 28 percent of Washington's low-income families currently have access to high-quality comprehensive preschools, through ECEAP and Head Start. (Please see the map on Page 2.) But the incipient delivery systems are there, and we have vision and energy with which to face the future.

ECEAP itself is moving forward toward new, more integrated models of service. With anticipated program expansion for the 1989-91 Biennium, DCD will begin to redesign the ECEAP service delivery system. Seven pilot "area agencies" will be designated to begin to study, develop, and evaluate effective service delivery systems, and rural and remote areas of the state will be targeted to receive assistance to plan creative service delivery systems. The innovative area agency model will allow ECEAP to function as part of a larger, more comprehensive continuum of proactive services for young children and their families. Can we make the future match our vision? Yes. Together.

**[ECEAP taught me] that even though I have a small child I can still find a job or go to college and still make a life for my baby and me.**
**-an ECEAP parent**

## WASHINGTON STATE GOVERNMENT REPORTS

Early Childhood Education Study: Washington's Three and Four Year Olds. Prepared by Educational Service District No. 121 as requested by the Washington State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. December, 1981.

Report of the Governor's Commission on Children. January, 1989.

"Washington State Readiness Initiative." Prepared by the Division for Community Services, Department of Community Development. May, 1987.

## ECEAP

An Investment in Washington's Children: The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program. Report on ECEAP Program Effectiveness, 1986-1987. Published by Bilingual Mini-Schools.

ECEAP Program Performance Standards. Department of Community Development.

## REPORTS FROM THE BUSINESS SECTOR

Committee for Economic Development. Children in Need: Investment Strategies for the Educationally Disadvantaged. 1987.

Institute for Public Policy and Management. "Northwest Economic Development: The Education Dimension." September, 1987.

Washington Roundtable. K-12 Education in Washington: Report and Recommendations. December, 1986.

Washington State Economic Development Board. Washington Works Worldwide: Positioning Ourselves to Compete in the New Global Economy.

## GENERAL SOURCES

National Governors' Association Center for Policy Research and Analysis. Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education; August, 1986.

Schweinhart, Lawrence J. and David P. Weikart, "Evidence That Good Early Childhood Programs Work," April, 1985.

Schweinhart, Lawrence J., John R. Berrueta-Clement, et al. "The Promise of Early Childhood Education," April, 1985.

Youth 2000: Report Two. September, 1988.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**1987 - 1989**

**LOCAL CONTRACTORS**

## CONTRACTORS 1988 - 1989

| Contractor | County | # of Children | Type of Organization |
|---|---|---|---|
| Paula Ackerlund, ECEAP Director<br>Aberdeen School District<br>216 North "G" Street<br>Aberdeen, Washington 98520<br>(206) 532-7690 | Grays Harbor | 54 | SD |
| Frances Mathison, Director<br>Lewis-Clark Community Action Agency<br>1805 - 19th Avenue<br>Lewiston, Idaho 83501<br>(208) 743-6573 | Asotin | 90 | CAP |
| Mary Ashby, Director<br>Community Child Care Center<br>Northeast 1410 Stadium Way<br>Pullman, Washington 99163<br>(509) 332-7005 | Whitman | 36 | CCC |
| Joan Erickson, Director<br>Chelan-Douglas Child Services Assoc.<br>1305 Kittitas Street<br>Wenatchee, Washington 98801<br>(509) 663-5179 | Chelan | 36 | CAP |
| LaVonne Douville, ECEAP Director<br>City of Seattle<br>Department of Human Resources<br>105 Union, Suite 160<br>Seattle, Washington 98101<br>(206) 386-1048 | King | 123 | CTY |
| Larry Siroshton, Director<br>Economic Opportunity Committee<br>of Clark County, Inc.<br>3405 Northeast 52nd Street<br>Vancouver, Washington 98661<br>(206) 694-3377 | Clark | 162 | NP |
| James Skucy, Program Manager<br>Enterprise for Progress<br>In The Community<br>1910 Englewood, Suite A<br>Yakima, Washington 98902<br>(509) 248-3950 | Yakima<br>Chelan<br>Douglas<br>Benton<br>Manson | 173 | NP |
| Wendy Roedell, ECEAP Director<br>Educational Service District #121<br>12320 - 80th Avenue South<br>Seattle, Washington 98178<br>(206) 772-6906 | King/Pierce | 515 | SD |

## Washington State's ECEAP

| Contractor | County | # of Children | Type of Organization |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lynn Glover, ECEAP Director<br>Linda Creech, Assistant Superintendent<br>Granger School District #204<br>Post Office Box 400<br>Granger, Washington 98932<br>(509) 854-1515 | Yakima | 54 | SD |
| Barbara Brauer, ECEAP Director<br>Kennewick School District #17<br>Kennewick, Washington 99336<br>(509) 582-1200 | Benton | 72 | SD |
| Jeannie Roberts, HS/ECEAP Director<br>Kitsap Community Action Program<br>1200 Elizabeth Avenue<br>Bremerton, Washington 98310<br>(206) 377-7667 | Kitsap | 144 | CAP |
| Frank Dieni, HS/ECEAP Director<br>Neighborhood House, Inc.<br>905 Spruce<br>Seattle, Washington 98104<br>(206) 447-8456 | King | 36 | NP |
| Peggy Nelson, Director<br>Okanogan County Child Development Association<br>Post Office Box 1844<br>Omak, Washington 98841<br>(509) 826-2466 | Okanogan | 36 | CTY |
| Robbin Dunn, Director<br>Mason-Thurston Early Childhood Programs<br>Olympia School District<br>1113 Legion Way<br>Olympia, Washington 98501<br>(206) 357-7714 | Thurston<br>Mason | 60 | SD |
| Janet Bent, HS/ECEAP Director<br>Reliable Enterprises<br>1514 Lum Road<br>Centralia, Washington 98531<br>(206) 736-1696 | Lewis | 24 | NP |
| Darlene Townsend, Administrator<br>Snohomish County Human Services Dept.<br>1316 Wall Street<br>Everett, Washington 98201<br>(206) 339-9200 | Snohomish | 108 | CTY |

| Contractor | County | # of Children | Type of Organization |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sharon Patacsil, Director<br>United Indians of all Tribes<br>Daybreak Star Center<br>Post Office Box 99100<br>Seattle, Washington 98199<br>(206) 285-4425 | King | 48 | NP |
| Jan Eyestone, Director<br>Walla Walla School District #140<br>364 South Park<br>Walla Walla, Washington 99362<br>(509) 527-3083 | Walla Walla | 36 | SD |
| Patt Earley, HS/ECEAP Director<br>Community Colleges of Spokane<br>Spokane County Head Start<br>East 7401 Mission<br>Spokane, Washington 99212-1148<br>(509) 536-8060<br>SCAN 271-9200 | Spokane | 90 | CC |
| Carlos Diaz, Executive Director<br>Genoveva Morales, ECEAP Director<br>Washington State Migrant Council<br>301 North First, Suite 1<br>Sunnyside, Washington 98944<br>(509) 839-9762<br>1-800-223-8515 | Grant<br>Adams<br>Yakima | 78 | NP |
| Anita Jackson, HS/ECEAP Director<br>The Opportunity Council<br>2001 "H" Street<br>Bellingham, Washington 98225<br>(206) 734-8396 | Whatcom | 54 | CAP |

Type of Organization:

CAP - Community Action Program
CC - Community College
CCC - Child Care Center
CTY - City or County Government
NP - Nonprofit
SD - School District

29 percent of ECEAP programs represent school districts
14 percent of ECEAP programs represent local governments
5 percent of ECEAP programs represent community colleges
5 percent of ECEAP programs represent child care centers
19 percent of ECEAP programs represent CAP agencies
29 percent of ECEAP programs represent nonprofits

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**1988 - 1989**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**1988-1989**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

| Member | Representing |
|---|---|
| Ms. Laura Barnett<br>Seattle, Washington 98144 | Parent |
| John Bowden<br>DSHS/Birth to Six Planning Project<br>12th & Franklin Street<br>Mail Stop: OB-33J<br>Olympia, Washington 98504-0095<br>(206) 753-1233 | OSPI/DSHS |
| Ms. Denese Bohanna<br>Tacoma-Pierce County<br>Health Department<br>3629 South "D" Street, FC3194<br>Tacoma, Washington 98408<br>(206) 596-2855 | Public Health |
| Ms. Glenda Brown<br>Asotin, Washington 99402 | Parent |
| Ms. Mary Kay Brown<br>Pierce College<br>9401 Farwest Drive SW<br>Tacoma, Washington 98498<br>SCAN 341-6542<br>(206) 964-6542 | Community<br>Colleges/Training |
| Ms. Janet Cline<br>Small Tribes Organization<br>of Western Washington (STOWW)<br>P. O. Box 578<br>Sumner, Washington 98390<br>(206) 593-2894 | Native Americans |
| Ms. Mary Cline, Director<br>Highline School Board<br>14435 - 5th Avenue South<br>Seattle, Washington 98168<br>(206) 241-2107 | Washington State<br>School Directors<br>Association (WSSDA) |
| Ms. Margaret Downs<br>Redmond, Washington 98502<br>(206) 235-2273 | WEA/Kindergarten<br>Teacher |

## Washington State's ECEAP

| Member | Representing |
|---|---|
| Ms. Phyllis Doyle<br>Seattle, WA 98105<br>(206) 525-1910 | Early Childhood Development Asso. of Washington |
| Ms. Robbin Dunn, Director<br>Mason-Thurston Early Childhood Programs<br>1113 Legion Way<br>Olympia, Washington 98501<br>(206) 357-7714 | Head Start Association |
| Mr. Robert Garlett<br>Burnt Bridge Creek Elem. School<br>14619-A NE 49th Street<br>Vancouver, Washington 98682<br>(206) 256-6017 | Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) |
| Ms. Suzanne Griffin<br>Superintendent of Public Instruction<br>Mail Stop: FG-11<br>Olympia, Washington 98504<br>(206) 586-2263 | OSPI |
| Ms. Dorothy Hollingsworth<br>140 - 23rd Avenue East<br>Seattle, Washington 98112<br>(206) 323-2520 | State Board of Education |
| Ms. Chris Lair<br>Office of Child Development<br>Division of Child & Family Services<br>Department of Social and Health Services<br>Mail Stop: OB-41<br>Olympia, Washington 98504<br>(206) 586-0252 | DSHS |
| Ms. Nancy McTaggart<br>Executive Director<br>Citizens Education Center Northwest<br>105 South Main, Suite 327<br>Seattle, Washington 98104<br>(206) 624-9955 | Citizen's Education Center Northwest |
| Mr. Steve Nielsen<br>Director of Education Relations<br>U. S. West Communications<br>1600 - 7th Avenue, Room 3203<br>Seattle, Washington 98191<br>(206) 345-7844 | Private Sector Washington Roundtable |

## ECEAP Advisor Committee

| Member | Representing |
|---|---|
| Ms. Dorothea Olsen<br>Executive Director<br>Educational Institute<br>for Rural Families<br>P. O. Box 2715<br>Pasco, Washington 99302<br>(509) 547-8826 | Migrant/Seasonal<br>Farmworkers |
| Dr. Sherrill Richarz<br>Department of Child<br>and Family Studies<br>Washington State University<br>Pullman, Washington 99164-2010<br>(509) 335-3773 | University/Training |
| Dr. Wendy Roedell<br>Educational Service District 121<br>12320 80th Ave. So.<br>Seattle, Washington 98178<br>(206) 772-6906 ECEAP/772-3636 ESD | ECEAP Directors |
| Ms. Margaret Sanstad<br>Region X Children's Bureau<br>2901 Third Avenue MS: 413<br>Seattle, Washington 98121<br>(206) 442-8111 | Alliance for Children,<br>Youth, and Families<br>(ACYF) |
| Mr. Ken Snyder, Bureau Chief<br>Head Start<br>Department of Health<br>and Human Services<br>Office of Human Development/Region X<br>2201 Sixth Avenue, MS: RX-32<br>Seattle, Washington 98121<br>(206) 442-0838 | HHS Region X<br>Head Start |
| Dr. Jack Starr<br>Director of Vocational<br>Education<br>Highline School District<br>15675 Ambaum Boulevard SE<br>Seattle, Washington 98166<br>(206) 433-2366 | Washington Association<br>of School<br>Administrators<br>(WASA) |
| Ms. Maralyn Thomas-Schier<br>Washington Association for the<br>Education of Young Children<br>4618 South Andover<br>Seattle, Washington 98118<br>(206) 587-6900/721-4928 | Washington Association<br>for the Education of<br>Young Children<br>(WAEYC) |
| Mr. John Walsh, Director<br>Lewis, Mason, Thurston<br>Community Action Council<br>1408 East State Street<br>Olympia, Washington 98506<br>(206) 352-9910 | Washington Association<br>of Community Action<br>Agencies (WACAA) |



35

## Washington State's ECEAP

| Member | Representing |
|---|---|
| Mr. Tim Weaver, Attorney at Law<br>P. O. Box 487<br>Yakima, Washington 98907<br>(509) 575-1500 | Private Sector |
| Ms. Maria Zacharias<br>KREM Channel 2<br>4103 South Regal<br>Spokane, Washington 99203-0037<br>(509) 448-2000 | Private Sector |
| Ms. Beth Langhorst<br>NW Regional Educational Laboratory<br>101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500<br>Portland, Oregon 97204<br>(503) 275-9500<br>1-800-547-6339 | Ex-officio |
| Ms. Suzy McCausland<br>NW Regional Educational Laboratory<br>101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500<br>Portland, Oregon 97204<br>(503) 275-9500<br>1-800-547-6339 | Ex-officio |